Press Release

Art Song Challenge 2025:
International Festivals Launch an Innovative Challenge

Basel, March 14, 2025 – Five leading art song festivals – **Heidelberger Frühling, Liedstadt, Schubertiada, Leeds Lieder, and LIEDBasel** – have joined forces to support young artists, reimagine art song, and challenge established structures.

"Together with emerging artists, we want to rethink art song. Through an open application process, we create greater fairness in opportunities and provide a stage for hidden talents who deserve recognition," say **Julian Prégardien and Kian Jazdi** from the **Liedstadt Festival**.

The **Art Song Challenge (ASC) 2025** emerges as a response to the **Eurovision Song Contest**, which will shape Basel and Switzerland's cultural landscape in May 2025. Inspired by the competitive spirit of Eurovision, the ASC invites young musicians to present their own vision of art song in a new, open format.

Rediscovering Art Song

The ASC seeks to gather **interpretations of art song that explore new musical, interdisciplinary, and culturally diverse directions**. Professional musicians from around the world are invited to submit video entries **by April 15, 2025**.

The most outstanding submissions will be awarded **prestigious concert engagements at the five partner festivals**, with an **artist fee of €1,000 per person plus travel expenses**. Additionally, an **online audience prize of €1,000** will be awarded.

Why an Art Song Challenge?

The ASC aims to **make art song more diverse and accessible**.

"As Artistic Director of LIEDBasel, I firmly believe that true innovation is not found in rigid competition structures or traditional recruitment mechanisms – but in the open discovery of untapped potential. Through the enriching collaboration with other leading festivals, we can unite our voices, amplify our mission, and transform classical art song into a vibrant and forward-looking form." **Silke Gäng, LIEDBasel**

The project follows **four key objectives**:

- **Supporting emerging talents**: Young musicians will have the opportunity to gain significant concert engagements.
- **Exploring new art song cultures**: The ASC seeks to make programs more inclusive and culturally diverse.
- **Promoting fairness in the classical music market**: The traditional audition system is being questioned by allowing artists to **proactively apply** for art song programs. At the same time, the ASC reduces barriers in live auditions, which are often influenced by external circumstances and privileges.
- **Expanding international reach**: By connecting with Eurovision, the ASC aims to **engage new audiences** for art song and foster cultural exchange between countries and institutions.

Apply Now!

"Songs are a universal phenomenon. They touch us; they speak to us as human beings. No matter our age, they accompany us through life, providing comfort, inspiration, and guidance. Songs are part of every culture's identity. The Eurovision Song Contest proves this every year, just as the rich concert life of art song across Europe does. As Heidelberger Frühling, a festival where Lied is deeply embedded in our DNA, supporting the Art Song Challenge is a heartfelt commitment. Together with LIEDBasel and our partner festivals, we look forward to the creative submissions that will showcase the vast diversity of art song." – **Anselm Cybinski, Heidelberger Frühling**

Artists interested in participating in the **ASC** can submit their entries **until April 15, 2025**. Further information and the application form can be found at **liedbasel.ch/art-song-challenge-2025**.

Press Contact & Information

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